

[From the Washington Times]

CHINA WON'T RELEASE TRIE'S BANK RECORDS—HOUSE INVESTIGATORS CAN'T GET ACCESS

(By Jerry Seper)

The Chinese government, which blocked congressional investigators from traveling to Hong Kong and Beijing to probe campaign-finance abuses during the 1996 election, has refused to release records from two Chinese banks targeted in the ongoing investigation.

Investigators, according to House sources, want to look at financial transactions at Bank of China branch offices in Macao and Hong Kong involving Democratic fund-raiser Charles Yah Lin Trie and Ng Lap Seng, a Macao real estate and casino tycoon also known as Mr. Wu, who visited the White House 12 times, including a dinner with President Clinton sponsored by the Democratic National Committee.

The banks, however, refused to release the documents, saying that they were owned by the Chinese government and that releasing them would violate Chinese law.

Last week, four investigators for the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee were scheduled to leave for China but were blocked by Chinese Embassy officials in Washington who rejected their visa applications. The denial prompted Rep. Dan Burton, Indiana Republican and the committee's chairman, to ask Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright to intervene in the matter.

In a letter to the committee, the bank's U.S. attorney, Christopher Brady, said that since the financial institution in owned by the Chinese government, it is "deemed to be a foreign state" under international law. Accordingly, he said, the bank is "immune from U.S. jurisdiction"—including any responsibility to respond to subpoenas issued by the committee.

"While the bank would like to try to help your committee as far as practicable, it does not believe that this extends to violating the laws of the jurisdiction where the documents are located," Mr. Brady wrote.

The New York lawyer said in an interview that while he was not aware of what the committee planned to do about the bank's refusal, he said the position "has support in the law."

Committee investigators were described by the sources as "frustrated" in their attempts to pursue accusations that the Chinese government sought to influence the U.S. political process during the 1996 presidential election.

Embassy spokesman Yu Shuning said China "has nothing whatsoever to do with the political contributions" in the United States.

Mr. Burton, the sources said, is expected to appeal directly to the Chinese Embassy for an exception to allow the banks to respond to the subpoenas. Failing that, they said, he will ask the Justice Department to seek a waiver from Mr. Trie to obtain his records directly from the bank.

Mr. Trie and a business associate, Antonio Pan, face trial Oct. 7 on 15 counts of obstruction of justice, conspiracy and wire fraud.

The indictment says Mr. Trie and Mr. Pan illegally diverted money to the DNC through "straw donors," who were then secretly reimbursed in cash by the two men. Mr. Trie also is accused of funneling more than \$600,000 to the DNC. The indictment says much of the money came from foreign sources.

Mr. Trie, who fled to China after the probe began, returned to Washington Tuesday. He has pleaded not guilty.

About \$1 million was wired from the Bank of China to the joint account of Mr. Trie and

Mr. Ng at Riggs Bank here, Senate investigators have said.

Mr. Trie came to public notice in 1996 when Mr. Clinton's legal defense fund announced it was returning \$640,000 in donations he had collected. Fund executives said they did not know the source of cash delivered in two envelopes. Donations included checks with signatures that matched those on other checks and money orders numbered sequentially but from different cities.

White House records show that Mr. Trie's campaign activities won him unusual access to top administration officials to promote personal business interests, including 10 dinners, lunches or coffees with Mr. Clinton, four of them at the White House; four events with Vice President Al Gore, one at the White House; and three White House tours with business associates, along with photos with the president.

Documents show that Mr. Ng visited the White House 12 times, including the dinner with Mr. Clinton. He went six times to see White House aide Mark Middleton, who left the administration in 1995 and is under investigation.

Records also show that on Feb. 6, 1996, Mr. Ng took a tour of the White House with seven other Asian visitors, including Wang Jun, a reputed arms dealer for the Chinese government who Mr. Clinton later acknowledged never should have been granted access.

1998 CONGRESSIONAL OBSERVANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to celebrate Black History Month with my esteemed colleagues today.

Black History Month marks a time in which we may all formally revisit the vast contributions and achievements of African-Americans to our country's rich history. Indeed, the legacy of the founder of Black History Month, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, is that of a poor man, who triumphed over adversity to earn a doctorate from Harvard and devote his life to teaching and recording the history of African-American life.

I would like to use this occasion to highlight two figures from my district in Illinois, whose personal talents and accomplishments have been matched by their dedication to aiding their communities.

Katherine Dunham was born in the beginning of the 20th century. She quickly established herself as a woman of enormous integrity and passion, for the humanities and social causes, which held such salience for her. She enjoyed a prominent place in the performing arts world as a choreographer combining Caribbean dances, traditional ballet, and African-American rhythms to create a dance known as the Dunham technique. Dunham's reputation as an accomplished dancer earned her engagements to dance in over 55 countries.

Dunham was unsatisfied, though, simply with the respect she had gained as a performer; Throughout the later part of her life, Dunham became engrossed in finding avenues to help others. In the arts field, she developed a school called the Performing Arts Training Center in East St. Louis. This school

offered African Americans the opportunity to become involved in the arts and learn about African cultural history. Recently, in the early 1990's, Dunham has also become a strong advocate for the welfare of the Haitian people.

Another public figure from my district has also challenged herself to find ways to act on her principles and leave a legacy of aid to her community. Jackie Joyner-Kersey, is an Olympic Champion who continues to make history with her remarkable athletic achievements. Nevertheless, it is her current work that has fueled her pride that she is actively giving back to communities across America.

In 1989, Joyner-Kersey founded the JJK Foundation which provides grants for leadership training for individuals in urban cities. One of her chief goals is to eventually provide a Youth Center to her home town community of East St. Louis, Illinois. She says she hopes to show that while:

There is discrimination. I know there is racism. There are things we don't have control over. But we do have control over our dreams and goals.

I hope we will all take time this month and throughout the year to recognize the many diverse contributions of African-Americans to our Nation's history. In so many ways, the qualities that all Americans hold dear such as strength, perseverance, ambition and integrity are evident in the lives of those African-Americans, and illustrate W.E.B. Dubois' belief that "The guiding of thought: and the deft coordination of deed is at once the path of honor and humanity."

THE 1999 BUDGET

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 11, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

THE PRESIDENT'S 1999 BUDGET

Last week President Clinton submitted to Congress his 368-page 1999 budget. In it he proposes to balance the federal budget next year—four years ahead of the target set in last year's historic budget agreement. If successful, the budget would be balanced for the first time in thirty years.

The annual budget is the most important government document. It is a plan for how the government spends your money, and a plan for how the government pays for its activities. It affects the nation's economy, and it is affected by that economy. If the economy is doing well, people earn more, unemployment is down, revenues increase, and the deficit shrinks. The President's budget is typically a master plan to focus the nation's attention on a President's priorities.

A few years ago it was nearly impossible to think that an American president would submit a balanced budget this soon. It marks an end to decades of deficits that have paralyzed our politics, shackled the economy, and held the American people back. A balanced budget would mark the beginning of a new era of opportunity for Americans.

The President projects revenues of \$1.74 trillion, spending of 1.73 trillion, and a surplus of \$10 billion. For each tax dollar taken in the President would spend 53 cents on benefits such as Social Security and Medicare,